AN ENTERTAINING FANZINE

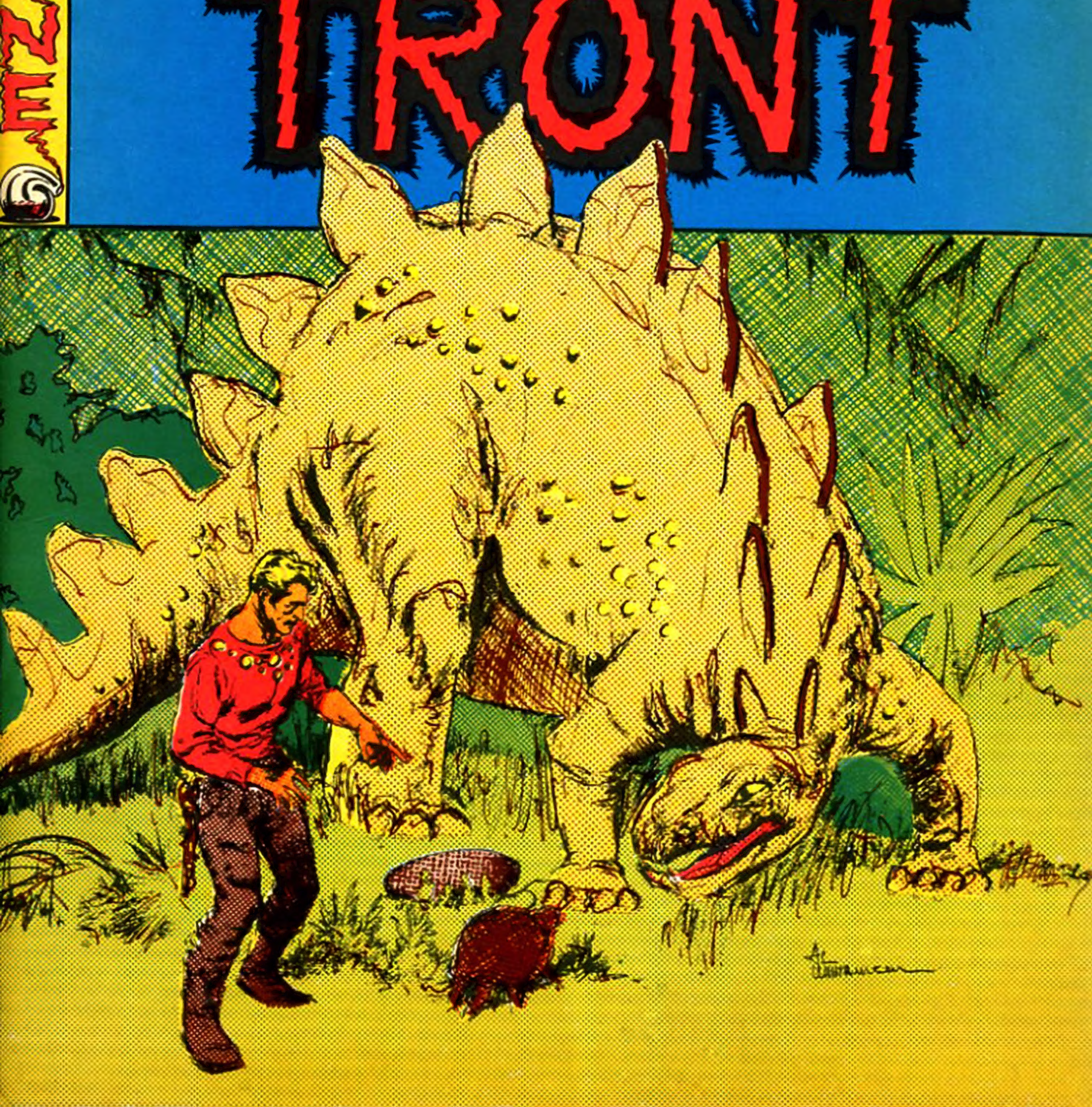
NO. 2
SEPT. 1968

J.W.

SQUA TROOPER

AN ENTERTAINING FANZINE

75¢



The Entertaining Comics Group

225 LAFAYETTE STREET, NEW YORK 12, N. Y., CAnal 6-1994-5

THIS

ISSUE

IS

DEDICATED

TO

LARRY

STARK

Jerry Weist
Editor & Publisher

Staff:

Bob Barrett: Frazetta editor and staff artist
Roger Hill: Editorial adviser and staff artist

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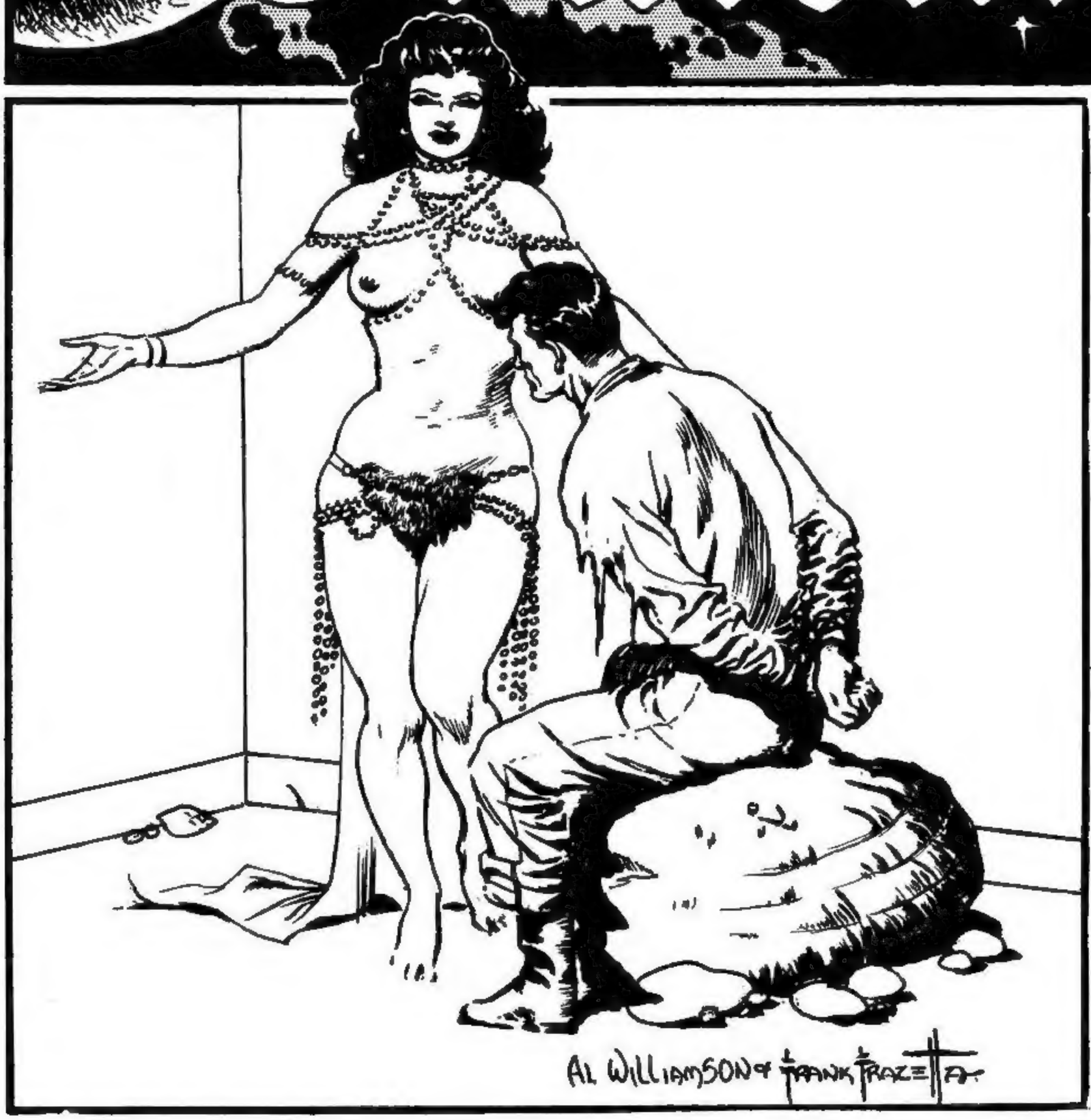

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This issue once again abounds with the talents of many. Our extreme thanks to Al Williamson for his cover and interior work. Reed Crandall is responsible for the beautiful back cover and the design for the editorial heading. The contents page illo is a Frazetta-Williamson discovered at the New York Con by Roger.

Roger Hill is responsible for the heading on the EC War article and once again the lines which adorn this page. Roger's mother, Mrs. Elaine Trefethen, did all of our proofreading and IBM typing.

The advertising work that showed up at the New York Comic Con this year, as well as in the pages of the latest Rockets Blast, are the work of Lance de Lipski. Lance also did the fine heading for the EC Science Fiction Covers article.

Appreciation is due to George Metzger for the two fine pieces that appear in this issue. They are side by side on pages 48 and 49.

Berni Wrightson was kind enough to see that we were able to present some work of his. He was a great help in preparing the portfolio.

The layout and lettering for the contents page is the work of Bob Barrett. The lettering for the Frazetta Collector is, as usual, his work. Bob also handled the lettering for the Wrightson Portfolio heading.

Extreme thanks goes to Harvey Kurtzman for his patience and help with the EC War article.

And last, but certainly not least, the whole staff of Squa Tront extends its warmest thanks to the entire staff of Wichita City Blue Print for their fine cooperation and assistance in printing this second issue.

EDITORIAL:

As this second issue of SQUA TRONT goes to press, many problems have been met and overcome. Yet the largest - money - still looms as the most aggravating problem. With more advertising and continued support from our readers, I am optimistic that this matter will soon be of no concern to us. Also with this issue, SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE $2.00 FOR ISSUES THREE AND FOUR.

The biggest disappointment to me with the circulation of the first issue was the indifference of the majority of our readers. To date, only about two dozen letters of detailed comment have been received. No matter how hard we beat our heads against the wall, we will never be able to completely satisfy you - the readers - until you make your wants known. We shall continue each issue with promotion of the best that Fandom has to offer in amature artists, the Frazetta Collector, and cover reproductions. However, in the future, our articles will be governed mostly by what we think is appropriate and the professional work that makes itself available. You EC fans out there can affect the course of SQUA TRONT just as much by giving us your suggestions.

First, let me summarize this issue's contents and then proceed with some explanation and announcements on the upcoming #3. The EC War article is something that has long been ignored. Harvey Kurtzman is responsible for much of the information in the article and should be given credit. My only concern is that the article is not all it could have been. The Al Williamson Portfolio speaks for itself. All the sketches for the Portfolio are layouts that Al did previous to many of the stories that saw impression later in the EC comics. Al has a painstaking concern for anything that he enjoys doing, and the finished product bears out this truth. This issue, the Frazetta Collector takes a casual yet interesting look at Frank's newspaper involvement. (For deeper information on Frank's complete history with the comics and the fantasy world, see the up-coming Burroughs Bulletin. If you're not a bibliophile -- than join! The dues: $3.00 per year. The address: Vern Coriell, 6657 Locust, Kansas City, Missouri, 64131.)

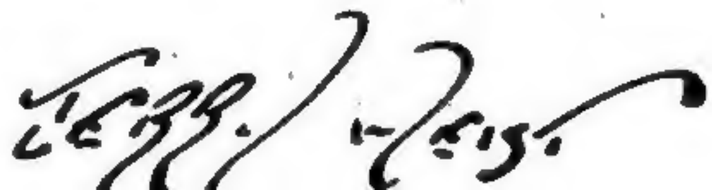
The Berni Wrightson portfolio is our pleasure to present. Berni is surely on his way to pro-dom, and we wish him a swift road. The EC SF covers were presented as our awareness grew a little. Many of you out there just can't afford complete EC collections instantaneously - yet thirst to see the SF issues. Our visit to New York last summer proved so interesting that we decided to pass some of it on to you. By the way, that big picture of Bill Gaines grinning (sardonically!) over his cardboard boxes isn't as cockeyed as it looks. Dem's thirteen (count 'em, 13!) copies - each - of every EC!!! So flip back the pages and foam! Our extreme thanks to Reed Crandall who took time out of his own schedule to do especially for Squa Tront our back cover and the design which flatters the preceding page. Al Williamson once again went out of his way to help us, and the cover illustration is, to us, extremely good work. At the time I write this, the cover is being printed, and I sincerely hope that the color overlay job does justice to both the front and back works.

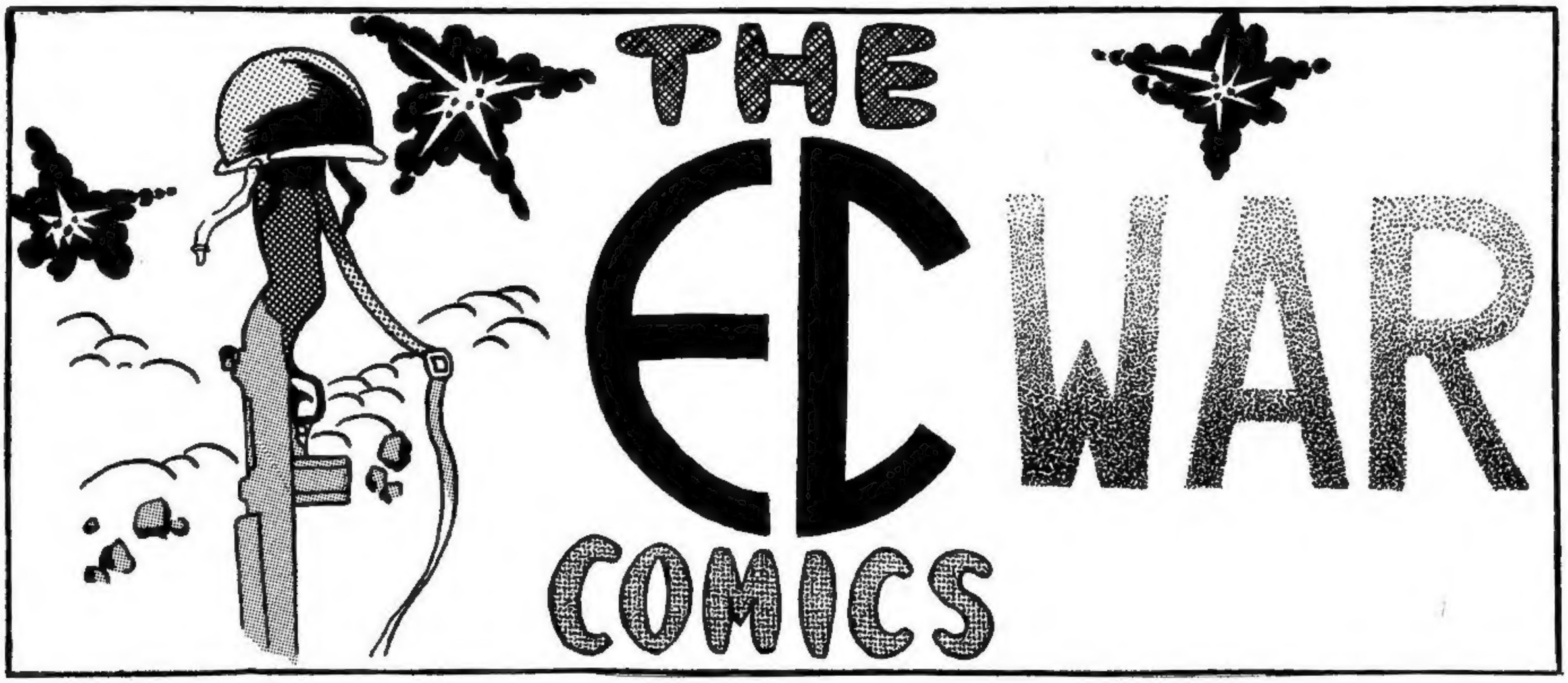
George Metzger was kind enough to donate for this issue and I hope that we can continue to use his art. In my opinion, George is doing some of the freshest and most creative work in Fandom today. See Graphic Story Magazine for more of his efforts. Lance de Lipski is a newly discovered talent that we intend to put to future use. Roger Hill, now fulfilling his obligation to Uncle Sam, is unable to contribute as much to this issue as the "Swabby" would like. His work and writing will be in future issues, however.

Now, on to our future. Let me emphatically state that 1,000 impressions were made of this second issue; and as we go to press, the FIRST ISSUE IS SOLD OUT. By issue #3, I hope to be able to make the same statement about #2. George Evans has been kind enough to send us some unpublished work. There will be an article in #3 concerning George's efforts for EC. The Flash Gordon prelims by Frank Frazetta that were to be featured in this issue will be done in #3. Harvey Kurtzman is sending our way some great unpublished work. This will appear in #3 also. Last but not least, Reed Crandall is going to present a portfolio that I am sure will please all fans.

Some announcements should be made this issue. There is a good chance that an EC HARDBOUND will see reality in the near future. Bill has contacted NOSTALGIA, and if it can be worked out, the book will eventually see print. So start writing to NOSTALGIA and the dealers and let them know that the sales will start pouring in when the book is finally printed! The more support, the sooner the effort will see print. You might pay some attention to the EC (excuse - DC) war comics coming out in the near future. They (DC) have contacted Bill and want to reprint some of the EC war stories as "War Classics" - so keep an eye out! Also, due to having our heads up our _____ this ish, we went to press without an ad for SPA FON, another EC fanzine now being published. If you haven't taken a look, do. Unpublished Frazetta, Crandall, Wrightson, concise articles - the works. Send to Rich Hauser, 4519 N. Richmond, Chicago, Ill. 60625. 75¢ @ for 2, 3, and 4. Subs: $1.50 for 5 and 6.

Once again, keep buying SQUA TRONT. Write us, and remember our old saying - "What the hell do you mean, you've already subscribed?!" Subscribe again! Hoohah! Many thanks for your support so far in this venture.





To confront a dealer with the question, "What EC's are most popular with the majority of collectors today?" would bring the same response that Bill Gaines was forced to realize back when EC was in its flower. The Horror titles, followed by the Crime, are most sought after. For reasons unclear to me, after collecting and being connected with EC Fandom for some years, people want to categorize the Horror and Crime titles as the personification of the EC effort.

"June, 1950! The incendiary spark of war is glowing in Korea! Again as before, men are hunting men... Blasting each other to bits... committing wholesale murder! This, then, is a story of man's inhumanity to man! This is a .... WAR STORY!" With these words, Harvey Kurtzman presented to the readers of EC in a nutshell the editorial policy of TWO-FISTED TALES and FRONTLINE COMBAT. Though TWO-FISTED TALES in its #18 Nov. - Dec. 1950 issue (issue #1, numbering continued from Haunt of Fear #17) was intended as an EC adventure comic, it quickly changed format with the oncoming of the Korean War. As Harvey put it himself in an interview with Rogue in December of 1965, "Then came the war in Korea, and I came out with a title as an editor. And this was my first title that I'd invented -- TWO-FISTED TALES. It was going to be an adventure book; with the Korean War, it turned into a war book." With war as the guiding format, TWO-FISTED soon became a resounding success and with its fifth issue the companion magazine FRONTLINE COMBAT joined the ranks.

To obtain a better insight into the two EC war comic titles, it would be worthwhile to take a small look at the history of the man behind them. Harvey's involvement with the comics prior to the advent of TWO-FISTED and FRONTLINE was indeed an interesting one. He was involved in one way or another with the "comics" since his childhood in New York. The earliest and undoubtedly rarest of his work was washed away by the rain and wind of New York City while Harvey lived in the Bronx. Each day saw Harvey drawing with chalk on the sidewalks and gutters of his environment, his first graphic effort, "Ikie and Mikie." With awards from the A.S.P.C.A. art contest, and the annual John Wanamaker competitions, Harvey advanced across the Harlem River to attend the High School of Music and Art. Here binding friendships were made with Al Feldstein, Johnny Severin, Bill Elder, Harry Chester, Ed Fisher, and Al Jaffee -- all of whom were to have association and involvement with Harvey in later years.

After two years at Cooper Union Art School, Harvey was called into the service, remaining in the United States and training for the invasion of Japan. With the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the war ended and Harvey went back to the comics. Now drawing and writing for adventure comics, Harvey advanced his style and creative ability even more. He did not return to art school as he felt that he had all the training he would be able to use. There was some work for DC and Timely, and then more and more involved work with EC. With his science fiction efforts for EC, Harvey was quickly recognized and in no time became consistently popular with the EC readers.

When the time for a new title arose at EC, Harvey was the natural choice for the editorship - and thus TWO-FISTED TALES came into being. From the beginning, the stories in TWO-FISTED and FRONTLINE were uniquely different from anything that had been done before. To quote Harvey from a recent conversation, "I was kind of a maverick inside of EC, and EC was the maverick of the comic book business!" TWO-FISTED TALES began with four adventure stories in its first issue. "Conquest", a story of Spanish soldiers on the coast of Mexico in quest of gold...followed by "Hong Kong Intrigue", a typical foreign Asian story that was common in '48 and '49. "Revolution!", by Wallace Wood, and "Mutiny", by Johnny Craig, finished off the issue.

With the second issue of TWO-FISTED, the lead story was concerned with the history that was then taking place - the Korean War. Most likely, because of advance planning, the other three stories were still on the "adventure" level. By issue number three, the first half of TWO-FISTED was about the war in Korea. It was becoming evident that the stories being written and illustrated were not of the usual type. There were no heros or villains. The enemy was not portrayed as brutal, perverted, or insane. The hero was not tall, handsome and always in the right. Not by a long shot. The first story to deal with the conflict in Korea told of an American soldier so infatuated with hate for the enemy that, in the process of breaking into a field hospital to kill an "enemy" soldier he had wounded on the battlefield, he murdered his own brother who had been placed in the same bunk. Kurtzman has often said that he always had a target he was aiming at when he wrote a story. Many times, this target was effective comment. When there was something to be said, it was said in a strong way. By TWO-FISTED #4, this comment was becoming a polished art. "Ambush", a story that forcefully put across the truth that there is no such thing as luck in war, succeeded in communicating its point - simply and clearly. Later in the issue, "Search", written and illustrated by Harvey, brought to light another of the editor's favorite devices - the use of irony. Number five of TWO-FISTED saw the birth of FRONTLINE COMBAT. TWO-FISTED #22 (#5) presented one of the most effective covers yet. Up to this time, Harvey was doing all the cover work. He continued doing the covers until nearly the end. For some reason, Harvey never signed the covers as did other artists. Whether he felt this detracted from the work or not, I do not know. Whatever the case, the covers were unmistakably the work of H. Kurtzman. The readers were now becoming acutely aware of the effort that Kurtzman was putting into the war books. Many times, Harvey would do a water color original of the cover before he even attempted the original work for the final cover job. This was to clear up coloring problems and help him figure out perspective and design qualities. The two covers printed at the end of this article are examples of this type work. The cover appearing first is a color prelim that Harvey did before the finished product, which immediately follows. One can notice the improvement in the wording in the one balloon. Also, the anatomy work is much better and more fitting to the subject matter of the cover.

Also, the excruciating amount of time that Harvey put into research was making itself clear. Although Harvey was putting in way over 8-hour days, the staff of TWO-FISTED TALES and FRONTLINE COMBAT was also doing its share. All the artists involved with the war titles: Wood, Feldstein, Craig, Severin, Elder, Davis, Berg, Estrada, Colan, Kubert, Evans, Toth, Crandall, Kringstein, and Harvey himself, were turning out some of their finest efforts. The artists always had a pile of research material that was sent along with each story that Harvey wrote, along with Harvey's prelim sketches to help out on perspective and character positioning. This made their job much easier and enjoyable to do. The result? Some of the most realistic, exact, and profoundly graphic stories that the comic book publishing world has ever seen.

Some of the letters coming into EC were personifying this. "I especially like the accurate and realistic drawings." Another - "I somehow obtained a battered, old copy of TWO-FISTED TALES here in Korea, and during a lull, found time to read it. Needless to say, I enjoyed it so much that I felt I had to write and compliment you on the realism of your battle sequences." Still another — "The story LIGHT BRIGADE was absolutely priceless!" More - "How can you guys keep up such good stories? I read one and think, 'They'll NEVER get a better one than this!' Then I read another and it's just as good - or better! How long can this go on?" Harvey's reply to that last line was, "HOW LONG CAN THIS GO ON? This is your editor's nightmare! Very often, in the middle of the night, we wake with a start, shrieking those very words! - ed." Still more - "I don't know if anybody else has noticed it or not, but when you draw an M-1, or any other weapon or piece of equipment, they look exactly like the McCoy!" Harvey's reply: "After one of our many trips to army camps, air-

plane factories, etc., we often sit back and wonder ... does anyone care?! Does all our 'blood, sweat, and tears' research mean anything ...! Then letters like the above come along, and everything is right with the world! - ed."

Harvey was completely free to do whatever he wished to in the war titles and the standard panel arrangement that was apparent in many of the other EC titles did not exist in the war mags. Many times, a story was made more effective by the breaking down of pictorial matter into four or more panels in a row. Many times, words were not needed to convey the meaning and the reader was confronted with a series of panels containing nothing but art work. These methods were used many times to their fullest effect. There were times when a story was told almost entirely by dialogue - with the panel space left completely to the artist. "Corpse on the Imjin" was an excellent example of this. A story of encounter, "Corpse" relates the surprise, shock, and terror of hand to hand combat. And the final message tells ... "The wind is rushing fitfully over the Imjin! It stirs the hair on the back of the dead man's head! The water ripples before the wind...laps at the shore... sways the body from side to side! The flowing river gently swings the body out, away from the bank and into the current! And now the current, weak near the shore, slowly turns the body around and around...and it is as if nature is taking back what it has given! Have pity! Have pity for the dead man! For he is not rich or poor, right or wrong, bad or good, don't hate him! Have pity.....for he has lost that most precious possession that we all treasure above everything...he has lost his LIFE!"

Much interest in the "graphic story" has arisen in fandom lately. There is a movement involved with establishing the graphic story securely amidst the comic medium. Whether or not this movement will succeed is a matter of question and time. But it can not be questioned that during the period of the EC war magazines, there were more truly graphic accomplishments than at any other time. The stories themselves seemed as if they came out of a book. And in due time, Harvey got around to the attempt of creating a novel-type comic book.

The EC specials, as they were called, were this attempt. There were three of a planned seven series on the Civil War - FRONTLINE COMBAT #9, TWO-FISTED TALES #31 and #35 - each issue developing further the stages of the internal struggle.

Never before had <u>any</u> war comic devoted whole issues to putting across a particular story or part of man's history. There is a unity to these "specials" that cannot be described. They simply flow - the reader is swept from one story right into involvement with the next. There were other specials: "A Document of the Action at the Chagjin Reservoir" (TWO-FISTED TALES #26), "Special Air Force Issue" (FRONTLINE COMBAT #12), and "A Document of the Action at Iwo Jima" (FRONTLINE COMBAT #7).

When EC readers picked TWO-FISTED TALES #41 off the stands, they were met with this statement on the first page .....

<u>IN MEMORIAM</u>

This will be the last issue of TWO-FISTED TALES. It is with sincere regret that we make this announcement, but as many of you have probably noticed, our efforts to sustain what we felt was a quality magazine have foundered and finally collapsed under the pressure of having to compete with the more "stimulating" type of comic-book.

The passing of TWO-FISTED TALES is the passing of an era for us at E. C. We just hope that you, our fans, received as much pleasure reading TWO-FISTED TALES as we received producing it over these past three years. Not that doing TWO-FISTED TALES has been without headaches; we have had our share. However, we cannot help but look back with nostalgia upon our experiences in connection with TWO-FISTED TALES; our sessions at the great New York Public Library (a treasure-house of rare old history books), where we relived the wars of the past. We have sprung the catapults with the Army of Caesar...wielded the glaive and the billhook at Agincourt...touched fuse to harquebus with Cortez...and primed and loaded the flintlock with General George Washington at Pell's Point. We charged into the Valley of Death

with the Light Brigade...we watched the Texicans massacred by the Mexicans at the Alamo ...saw the first shot lobbed from a mortar into Fort Sumter...followed Teddy Roosevelt, his Rough Riders and his Gatling Guns up San Juan hill and flew in Baron VonRichtofen's blood-red Fokker over the valley of the Somme.

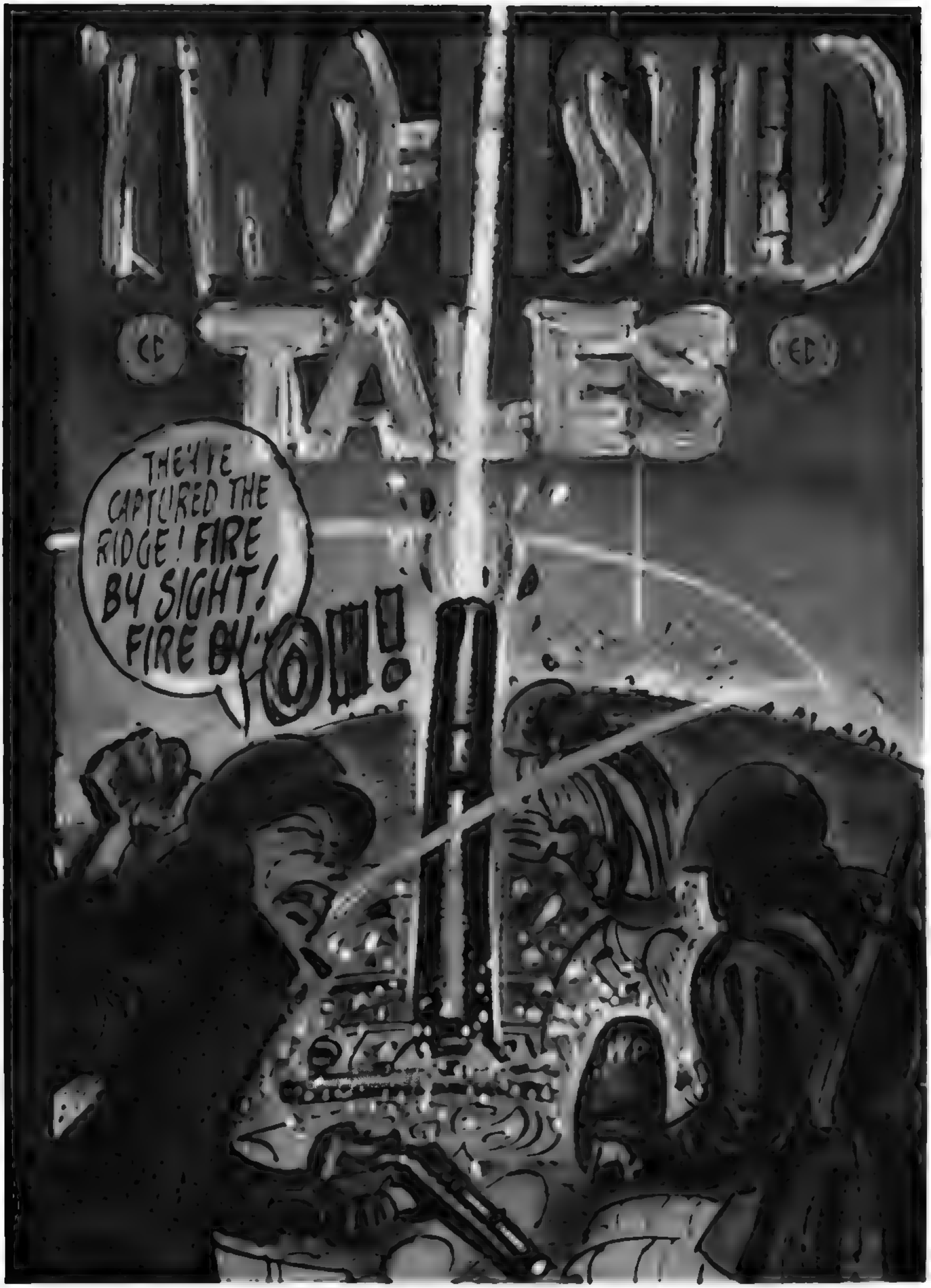
Then of course there were the unforgettable trips to the Army, Navy and Air Force with whose cooperation we rode a Sherman tank, went under the water in a submarine, and flew inside an SA-16 rescue plane, to mention a few of our experiences. We could fill a book with the names of the people who helped us with TWO-FISTED TALES...soldiers, sailors, airmen...heroes from the Korean war...jet-aces...veterans.

To the hundreds of people in the armed forces, in the airplane plants, in the libraries and collections, who were all so helpful to us, we owe a great debt of gratitude. To the hundreds of thousands of readers who bought and read our magazine, we also owe a debt of gratitude.

Perhaps in the future, TWO-FISTED TALES or a TWO-FISTED TALES type magazine will be revived. We profoundly hope so. Until such time, we relax the arms, unclench the fingers of our TWO-FISTED TALES, and we stretch the open hands towards new, and we hope more successful fields of endeavor. - Harvey Kurtzman, editor.

With these words, Harvey Kurtzman and the staff of TWO-FISTED TALES and FRONTLINE COMBAT put a close to their two war magazines. Harvey's last issue was the special Civil War issue of TWO-FISTED TALES, dated October 1953. Issues #36 through #41 were written by Colin Dawkins. FRONTLINE COMBAT died with #15, January 1954 - and this issue was a special where every artist wrote as well as illustrated his own story.

"Perhaps in the future, TWO-FISTED TALES or a TWO-FISTED TALES type magazine will be revived." The attempts have been made, Harvey, but none can hope to even equal the excelling quality that the EC war comics presented.


THEY'VE CAPTURED THE RIDGE! FIRE BY SIGHT! FIRE BY—
YOW!!

WAR AND FIGHTING MEN

TWO-FISTED TALES

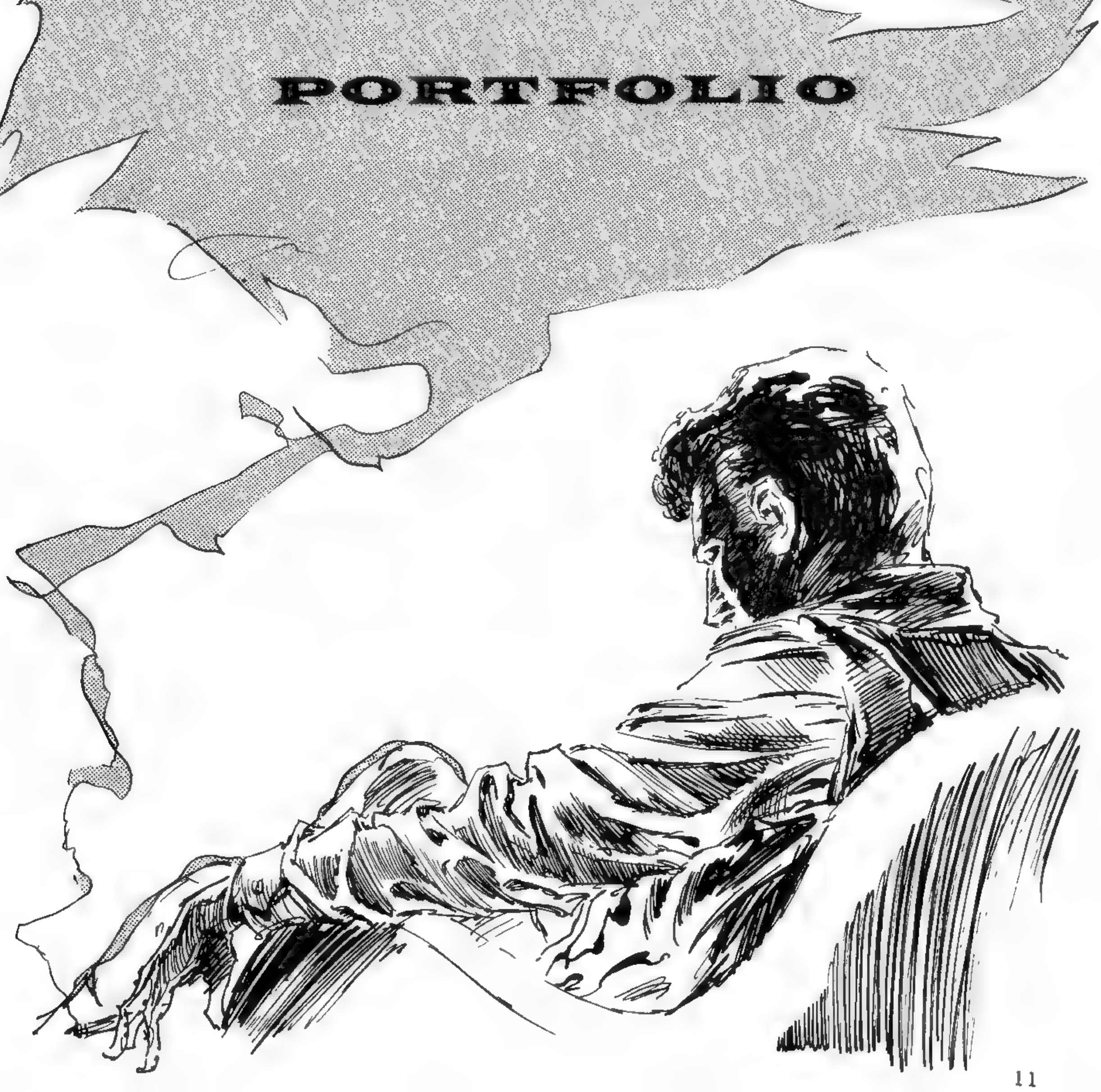
AN ENTERTAINING EC COMIC

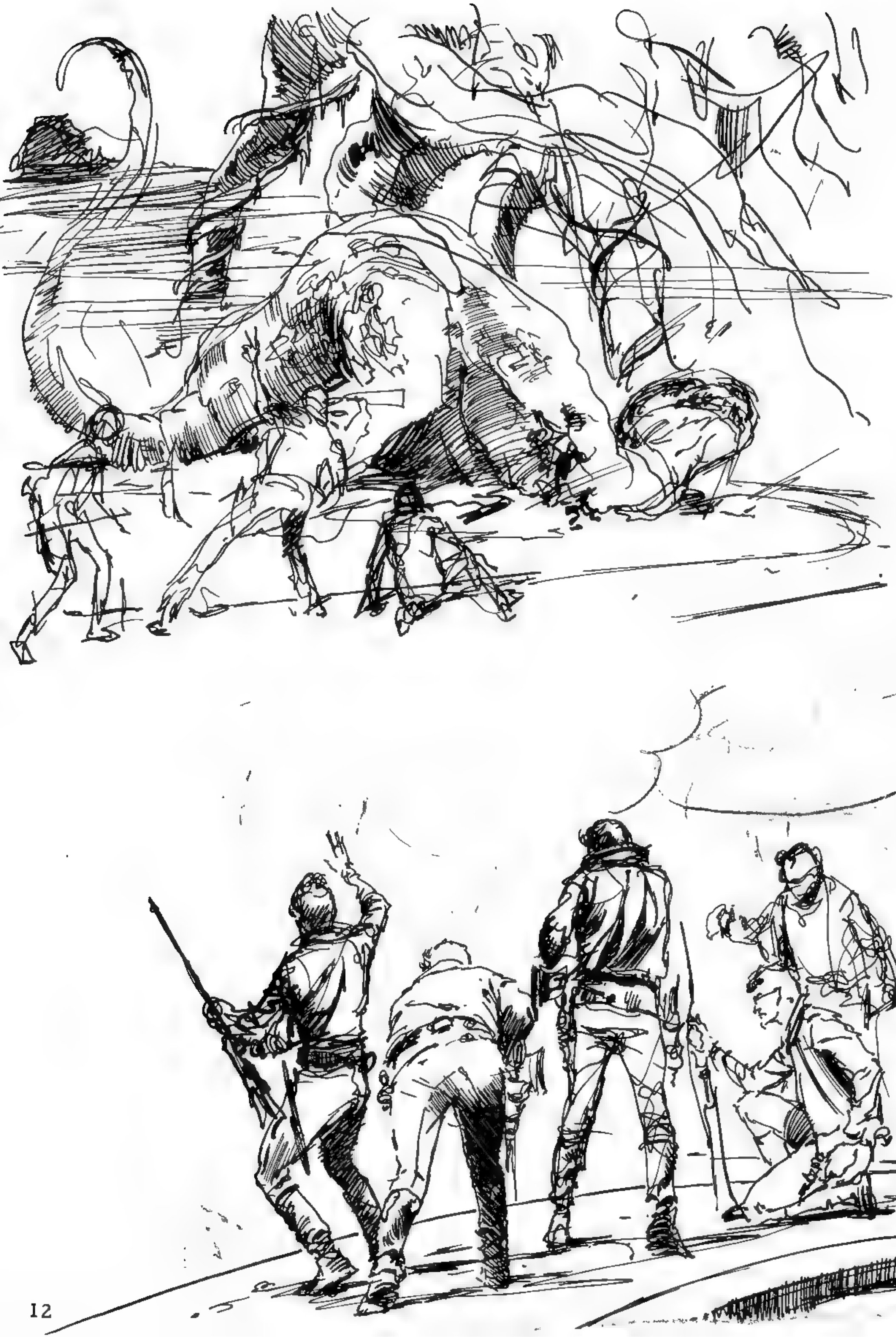
AN ENTERTAINING EC COMIC

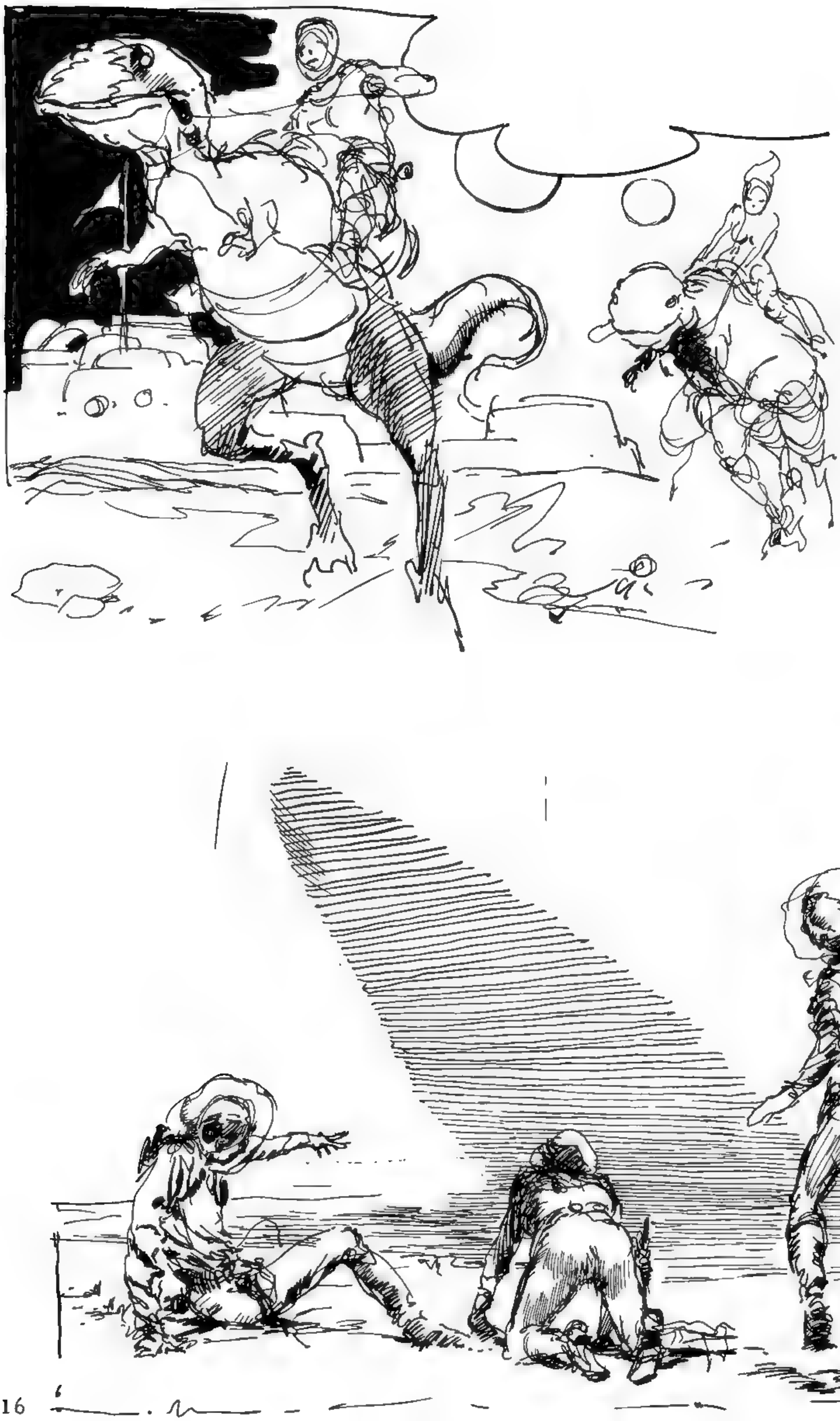
THEY'VE CAPTURED THE RIDGE! FIRE BY SIGHT! FIRE B... UH!

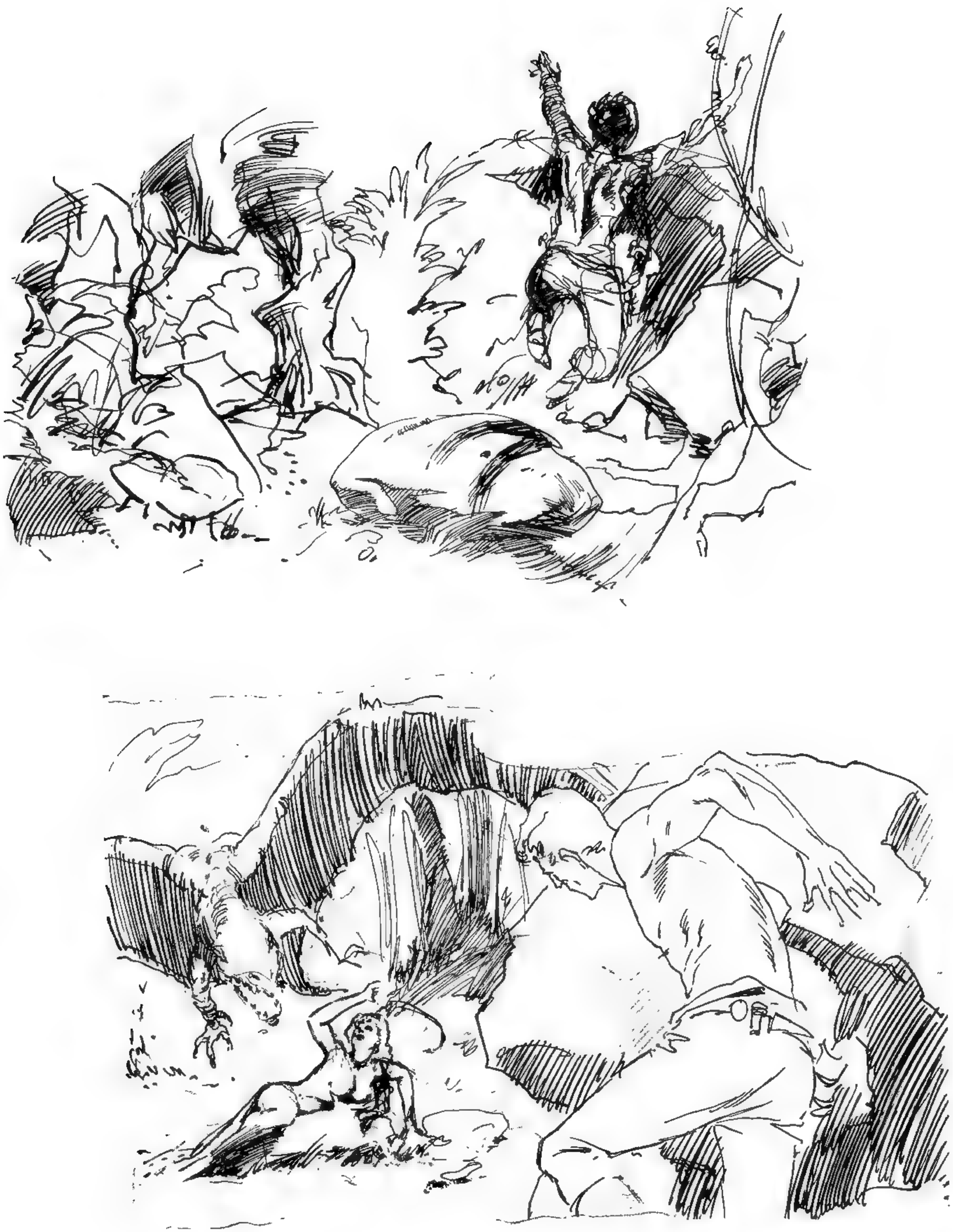
Arthur Adams

PORTFOLIO









TIGA

by

FRANK FRAZETTA

and

JOE GREENE

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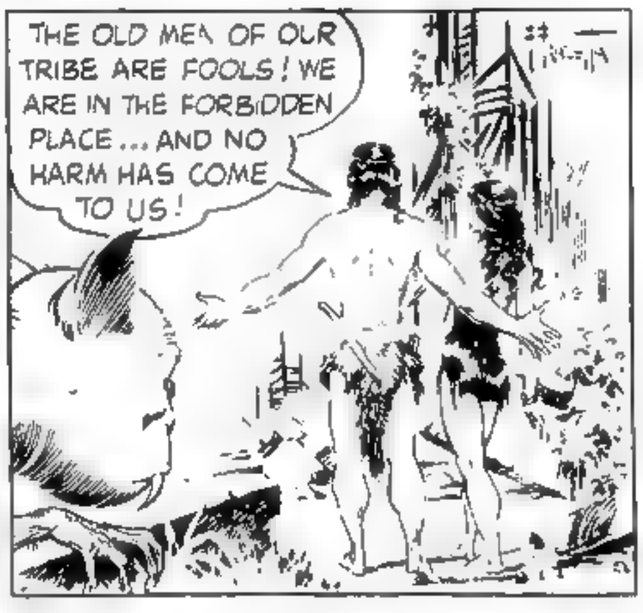
IT IS ALL MY FAULT, TIGA! IF I HAD NOT WANDERED TOO FAR FROM OUR TRIBE...
IT CANNOT BE HELPED NOW, MARI! WE MUST GO INTO THE FORBIDDEN PLACE. IT IS OUR ONLY ESCAPE.

BUT IT IS AN EVIL PLACE, TIGA? I AM AFRAID! WHO KNOWS WHAT DANGERS WE WILL FACE THERE!
IT WILL BE WORSE IF THEY CAPTURE US.

THE OLD MEN OF TRIBE SAY IT IS DEATH TO ENTER TIGA! IT IS AN EVIL PLACE
IT IS DEATH FOR US TO STAY HERE. THE SWAMP MEN WILL CAPTURE US

RUN, MARI! RUN!

SEE, MARI? THE SWAMP MEN ARE AFRAID TO COME INTO THE FORBIDDEN PLACE!
BUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO US HERE, TIGA?


THE OLD MEN OF OUR TRIBE ARE FOOLS! WE ARE IN THE FORBIDDEN PLACE... AND NO HARM HAS COME TO US!

THE TALES THE OLD MEN OF THE TRIBE TELL ARE NOT TRUE, MARI! THIS IS INDEED A STRANGE PLACE... BUT THERE IS NOTHING HERE TO HARM US.

PERHAPS ONCE THERE WAS DANGER HERE... THIS BEAST SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN TURNED TO STONE.

THIS PLACE IS EVIL — EVEN AS THE OLD MEN SAY! I AM AFRAID.

WHAT IS THERE TO FEAR—
LOOK! STRANGE LITTLE BEASTS ARE COMING TOWARD US!

I DO NOT FEAR THESE LITTLE BEASTS!
THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM, TIGA!

THEY ARE COWARDLY, MARI! COME, WE SHALL ESCAPE EASILY!

THE LITTLE BEASTS ARE WISE! THEY KEEP THEIR DISTANCE!
YES AND ONLY WAIT FOR A CHANCE TO ATTACK US!

LOOK, TIGA! THERE ARE MORE OF THEM AHEAD! WE'RE TRAPPED! THEY ARE ON ALL SIDES.

BACK, MAR.! WE CANNOT LEAVE THIS WAY!

QUICKLY, MAR! CLOSE THE OPENING!

HA! THESE BEASTS HAVE SHARP FANGS— BUT THEY ARE NOT STRONG!

SEE, MAR!? I HAVE KILLED IT!

WE MUST FLEE FROM HERE, TIGA! COME! QUICKLY!

YOU ARE RIGHT, MAR! WE MUST GO—EVEN TO FIGHT THE LITTLE BEASTS OUTSIDE!

HURRY, TIGA! WE KNOW NOT WHAT MAY COME OUT OF THE OPENING IN THE WALL.

WE'LL RUN FOR THE FORESTS!

WE ARE TRAPPED HERE IN THE FORBIDDEN PLACE, TIGA! THE OLD MEN OF OUR TRIBE WERE RIGHT... THIS PLACE IS EVIL!

BACK, MAR! THESE BEASTS WILL NOT ATTACK IF WE SHOW THEM WE CAN FIGHT.

QUICK! GET INSIDE!

I WILL CLOSE THE OPENING! WE SHALL BE SAFE IN HERE

HOW STRANGE IS THIS PLACE! IT IS LIGHT HERE— YET THERE ARE NO FIRES

IT IS LIKE A CAVE.. AND YET, NOT LIKE A CAVE

ONE... OR A FEW OF THEM I CAN KILL! BUT THERE ARE MANY WAITING OUTSIDE! WE CANNOT LEAVE THIS WAY, MAR!!

THE OPENING IN THE WALL, TIGA! PERHAPS IT IS A WAY OUT?

YOU ARE RIGHT... WE MUST TRY THIS WAY!

I HAVE NEVER SEEN SO STRANGE A PLACE!

IF EVER WE CAN RETURN TO OUR TRIBE, TIGA.. WHAT WONDERS WE SHALL HAVE TO TELL THE OLD ONES!

THE STEPS END HERE. WE ARE DEEP IN THE GROUND. WHERE SHALL WE GO NOW?

THERE IS ANOTHER OPENING AHEAD, TIGA. LET US SEE WHAT IS THERE!

CAN THESE THINGS BE EVIL? WHY HAVE THE OLD ONES OF OUR TRIBE WARNED US AGAINST THIS PLACE

LOOK THERE, T.GA! PEOPLE LIKE WE ARE! BUT HOW WERE THEY ABLE TO GO INTO THE WALL.

MEN OF A STRANGE TRIBE! THEY DO NOT MOVE!

THEY HAVE TURNED INTO STONE.

PERHAPS THE OLD ONES WERE RIGHT AFTER ALL! THERE MUST BE SOME STRONG EVIL HERE! I CANNOT UNDERSTAND THIS.

THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT ALIVE, MARI! THEY HAVE BEEN TURNED TO STONE BY SOME STRONG MAGIC!

THE OLD ONES CALL THIS THE ***FORBIDDEN PLACE!*** THEY SAY THERE IS EVIL AND DEATH HERE. PERHAPS WE DO WRONG TO DISOBEY THE LAWS OF THE TRIBE

WE DID NOT CHOOSE TO COME HERE, TIGA! HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?

WHAT IF THERE IS SOMETHING HERE THAT WILL FREEZE US INTO STONE?

NO HARM HAS COME TO US YET, T GA!

WHY SHOULD SOMETHING HAPPEN NOW? I WILL TOUCH THIS STONE BOY'S HAND...

NO, MARI! DO NOT DO IT!

THESE STONE PEOPLE CANNOT HARM US, TIGA! I WILL TOUCH THE HAND OF THIS LITTLE ONE —

NO, MARI!

THERE MIGHT BE SOME EVIL HERE, MARI!

LOOK! THE HAND! IT IT MOVED!

THE WALL, MARI! IT IS OPENING UP!

WHAT HAVE I DONE, TIGA? WHAT EVIL WILL FALL UPON US NOW?

WE CAN ONLY GO FORWARD! WE MIGHT YET FIND A WAY TO ESCAPE

LOOK, MARI! WHAT STRANGE ***THINGS*** ARE THESE?

THESE MEN LOOK LIKE THEY ARE ALIVE! THEY ARE NOT LIKE THE STONE MEN WE SAW BEFORE.

YET THEY ARE LOCKED INSIDE THE STONE THROUGH WHICH WE CAN SEE.

DO NOT FEAR US, MY CHILDREN! COME IN! YOU ARE THE FIRST HUMAN BEINGS TO COME HERE IN A THOUSAND YEARS.

.....and thus ends the first attempt by Frank Frazetta of a newspaper strip! Conceived by Frazetta in 1948 (not 1950, as erroneously reported in WITZEND) and scripted by Joe Greene, a script writer for Standard Comics (a company for whom Frank also worked at this same time), TIGA never made it. Why? This is a question that can probably never be answered. It had all the ingredients that a successful newspaper strip should have -- especially good art! The script was just building up to a whopping good story when further work on the strip was halted.

In 1952, Frank began work on his first syndicated strip, JOHNNY COMET. I remember when I first heard this title mentioned, my mind conjured up visions of a Flash Gordon or Buck Rogers type hero. One can imagine my surprise when I was finally able to see some of these strips and they were adventures of a roving race car driver. Whatever the story and concept lacked was more than made up for by Frazetta's artistic talents. Scripted by Earl Baldwin, a Hollywood script writer, the stories were mediocre and of a type relegated to grade B movies. In September of 1952, the Sunday page changed its format from a continued story to one complete in itself every Sunday and was of a comedy nature. Then, in December, the strip experienced another change -- this time in title. JOHNNY COMET first began under the by-line of Peter De Paolo and Frank Frazetta. De Paolo was a veteran race car driver whose name was associated with the strip strictly to help sell it. Probably because he wished to remove his name from the strip explains why the title was changed to ACE McCOY. Needless to say, only a short time later - in February 1953 - the strip sank into oblivion!

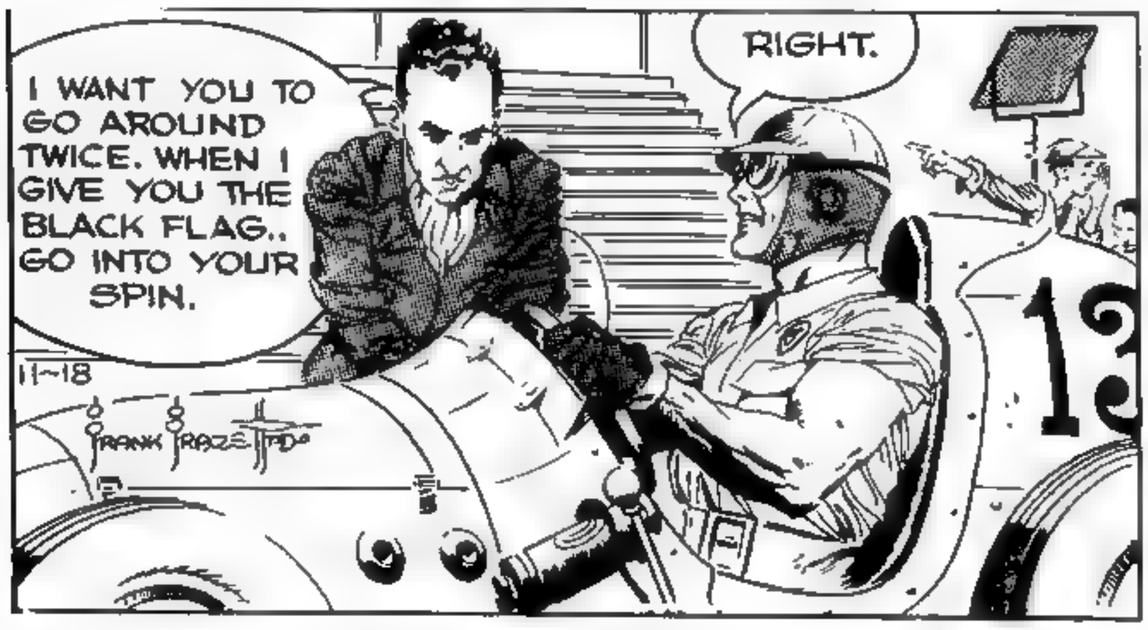
Also in February 1953, Frazetta pencilled the daily FLASH GORDON strip for Dan Barry -- but only for a week or so. He was then contacted by Al Capp to work for him ghosting the LI'L ABNER strip -- which he did for nine years.

Frank tried his hand at a newspaper strip at least twice more. One was a collaboration with Jerry Capp, Al Capp's brother, on another humorous daily strip somewhat in the vein of Bob Oskner's SOOZY. It hardly got off the ground and was never sold to a syndicate.

The other was a Sunday strip entitled NINA. This was completely the work of Frazetta. He conceived the idea and also the script. If Frank could have completed enough of it to have interested a syndicate to buy it, it would have been a collectors dream! The beginning was somewhat similar to Frank's classic THUN'DA -- airplane crashing into a mountain...only one survivor, etc. BUT the survivor was a beautiful blonde girl! After the plane crash, Nina wanders aimlessly until she falls through a large hole in the ground -- ending up in an underground river. When she finally reaches daylight, she is in a land of primitive beauty, peopled by primitive men and giant prehistoric beasts of prey. Sound familiar?? Of course it does -- BUT who cares as long as it was the work of FRANK FRAZETTA!!! What art that was completed on NINA can be seen in a special issue of the Burroughs Bulletin devoted entirely to Frank Frazetta and also an up and coming issue of WITZEND will feature a complete NINA Sunday page -- no doubt with a script change!

JOHNNY COMET

By Peter DePaolo and Frank Frazetta



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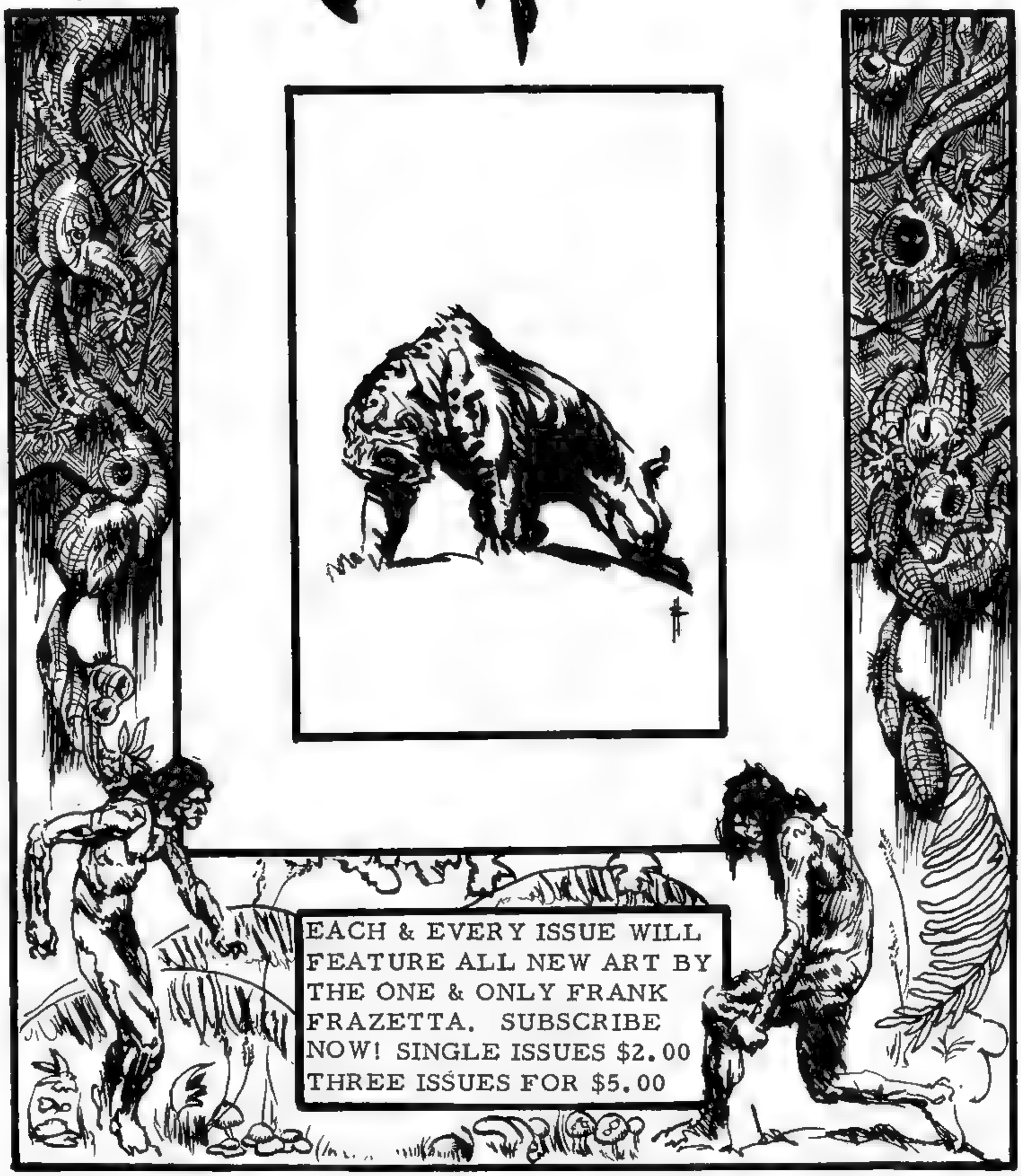
The following is a list of books which have either been released since our last issue or are yet to be released. Of course, they all have one thing in common: Magnificient covers by Frank Frazetta!

CONAN by Robert E. Howard.....Lancer Books Inc.
* CONAN THE AVENGER by Robert E. Howard..... Lancer Books Inc.
WOLFSHEAD by Robert E. Howard..... Lancer Books Inc.
(This cover was actually intended for BRAK THE BARBARIAN but Banner Books went out of business so Lancer wanted to use it on WOLFSHEAD -- as a result, when Avon decided to go ahead and print BRAK, Frank had to do them another cover.)
THONGOR IN THE CITY OF MAGICIANS by Lin Carter..... Paperback Library
THE SERPENT by Jane Gaskell..... Paperback Library
ATLAN by Jane Gaskell..... Paperback Library
ROGUE ROMAN by Lance Horner..... Fawcett
* CREATURE BEYOND INFINITY..... Popular Library
* OUTLAW WORLD..... Popular Library
BRAK THE BARBARIAN by John Jakes .....Avon

* Yet to be released.

ATTEZARF

FIRST ISSUE OUT SOON!



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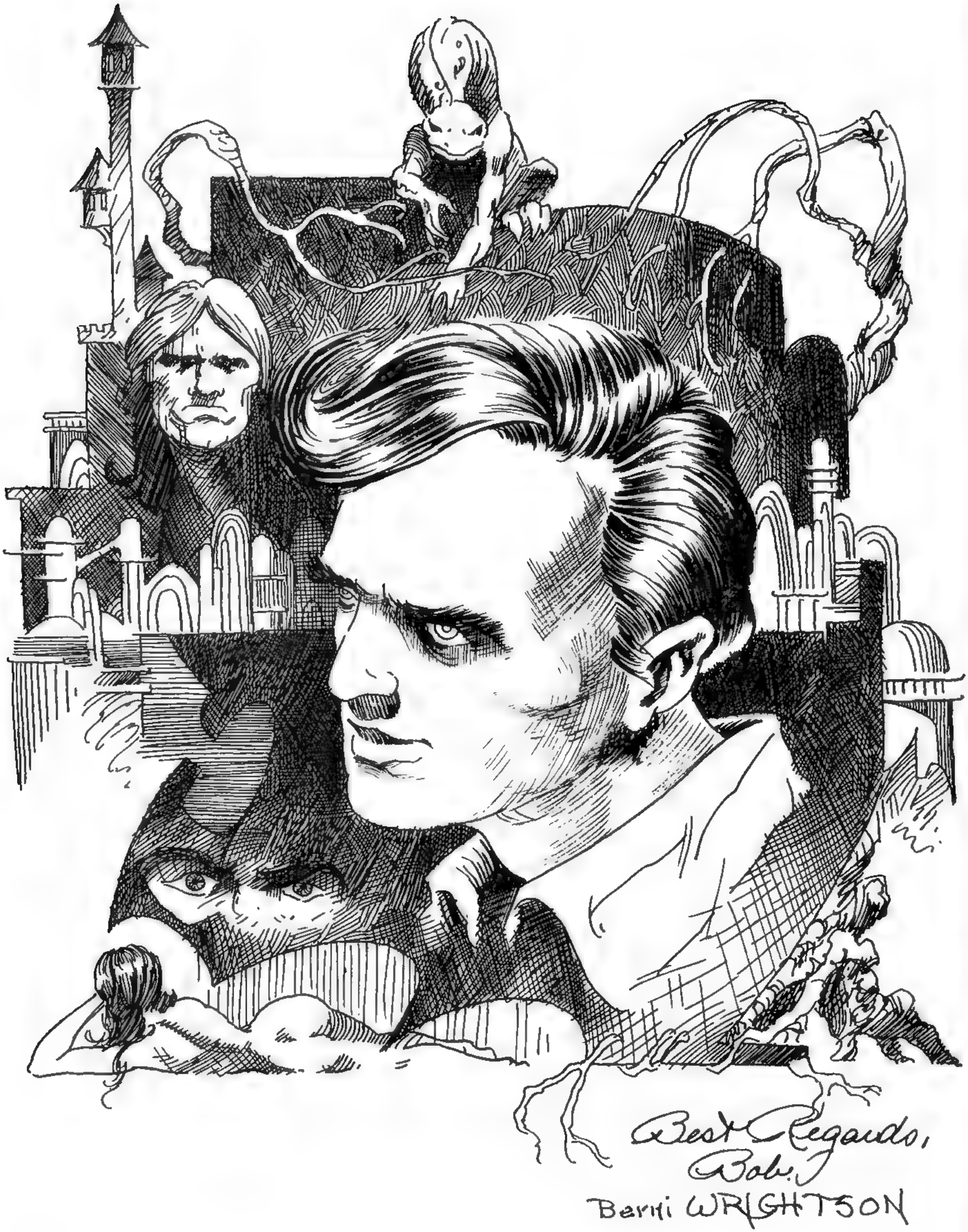

Best Regards,
Bob.
Berni WRIGHTSON

PROFILE

Berni Wrightson

I was born Bernard Albert Wrightson on October 27, 1948, and changed my first name to Berni last year because I didn't want it confused with the Olympic diver, Bernie Wrightson (no relation - that I know of).

I became interested in art at about age twelve and when I was about fifteen, "discovered" Frazetta. He's been a constant source of inspiration and enjoyment (and many times a discouragement!) since then.

My aims -- well, I'd rather not set my sights on anything definite because once I get there, then what? ? ? I'll just go on drawing and let nature take its course.

I work as an editorial artist for the Baltimore Sun papers and free-lance for anything and everything. (Editor's note: Berni has also ghosted for one of the up and coming professional artists who was also a fan artist a year or so ago. His first professional job is the dust jacket for L. Sprague de Camp's THE CONAN READER. Besides SQUA TRONT, Berni has done work for various other fan publications -- such as AMRA, SPA FON and PRISM.)

Back to Frazetta... He's probably inspired me more than anyone else and to this day, I hear so much said about my copying or "swiping" from him. Well, I have never had a piece of Frazettart on the board while working. This is just my natural way of drawing, as I was drawing like this long before I ever laid eyes on his work. It's just my misfortune (?) that our work appears similar.

Very special favorite artists: Graham Ingels, Al Williamson, Al Dorne, Jeff Jones, Jack Davis

and...and...oh yea...what's 'is name!!!!!*

*(Frazetta!)

Wright 2011

WrightSon

CONVENTION

While attending the 25th World Science Fiction Convention in New York, the staff of SQUA TRONT made some new and lasting friendships. Among people with parallel interests, our knowledge was broadened and refined. SQUA TRONT itself saw good sales at the dealers' room, and it was here that the editor found that throughout the whole magazine he had just printed, there was narry a subscription address. After New York, many people knew about SQUA TRONT - but not where to send for it!

Editor Weist parted with his golden age collection, thus bringing SQUA TRONT out of debt to the printers. Staff artist Roger Hill finished off his dream of completing the EC line by snarfing up the last few numbers that he needed. Our other staff member, Bob Barrett, indulged in his favorite pastime - the taking in (sightwise!) of Frazetta art. A good time was definitely had by all.

The Burroughs Bibliophile luncheon was hosted by guest artists Harold Foster and Frank Frazetta. Both made brief speeches and were kind enough to sign autographs and such. Frank later allowed any fans who wished to come up to his room and see all of the originals for the Conan books, Creepy and Eerie covers, and some older comic work. Needless to say, tongues were hanging and eyes rolled about the floor! Roger Hill and myself were given a tour of the Gaines home and New York in general by Bill Gaines. This was an exciting experience for both of us in that many questions were answered, and our insight into EC was all the more broadened. Bill was kind enough to give us free attendance at "THE MAD SHOW" which was playing at the time as an "off Broadway" production, and later hosted us for a day at the MAD offices.

Before the convention was over, I managed to sneak off with Jack Promo to Al Williamson's home and visit with him. Al's collection and home is really something for a collector to behold. The photos on the preceding pages are snaps from these fine times and we hope you enjoy looking over them as much as we enjoyed experiencing them.

Top left: Frazetta and original.

Top right: Harold Foster at Bibliophile Luncheon.

Bottom left: Bob Barrett slyly scans the Frazetta hotel room, and when nobody's lookin' - ZAP! - out the door!

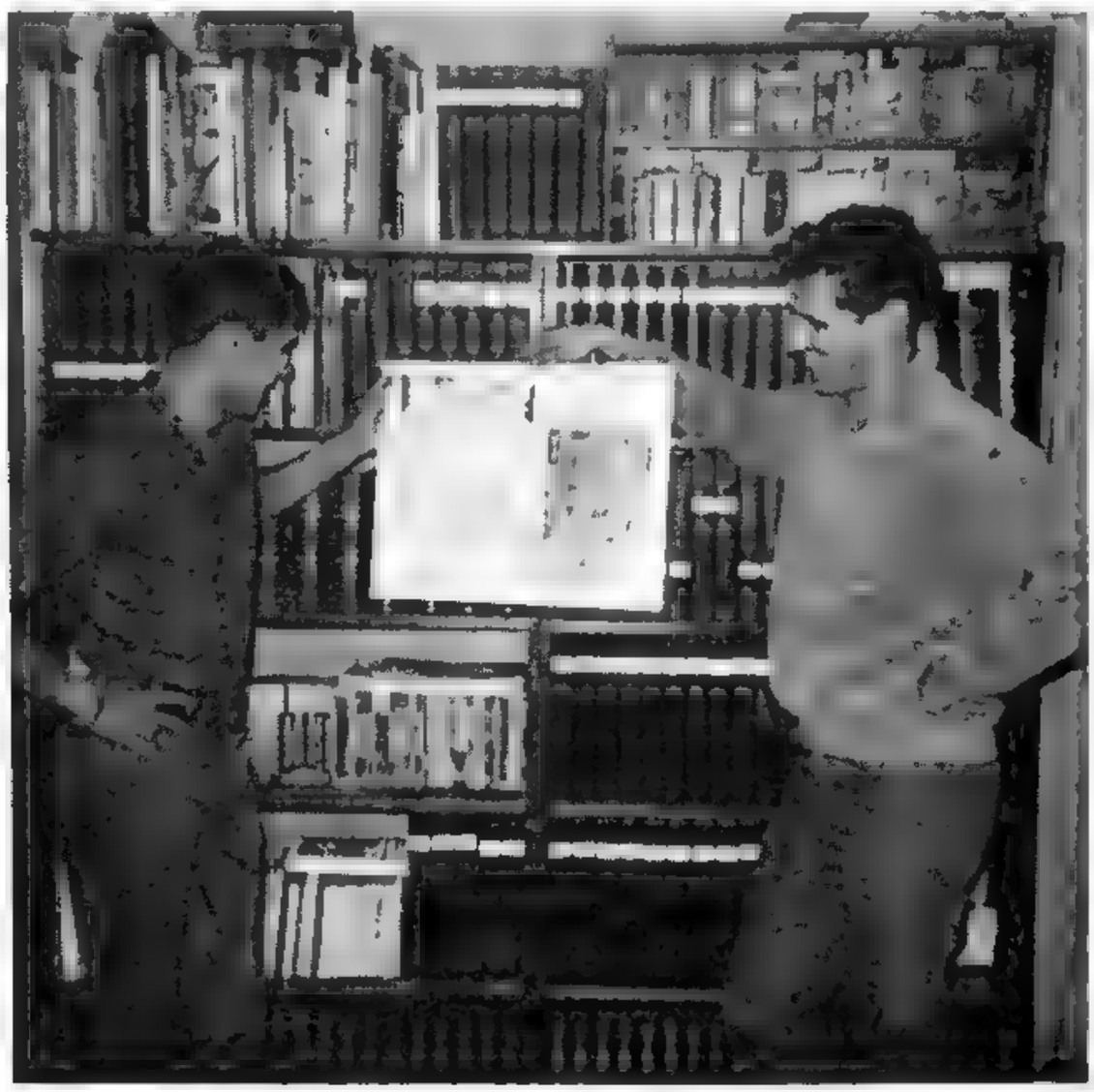
Bottom right: Al Williamson with original Flash Gordon page.

Top left: Al, flanked by original covers for Flash Gordon #4 and #5.

Top right: Bill and Roger observe New York skyline from Bill's Balcony.

Bottom left: Bill relaxing at home.

Bottom right: Al and myself holding the original to Flash Gordon #1.



Top left: Nick Meglin behind desk, Joe Orlando at MAD offices.

Top right: Original Johnny Craig painting.

Bottom left: Original Al Feldstein painting.

Bottom right: Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein in Bill's office.

HOOHAH ! ! ! ! ! !

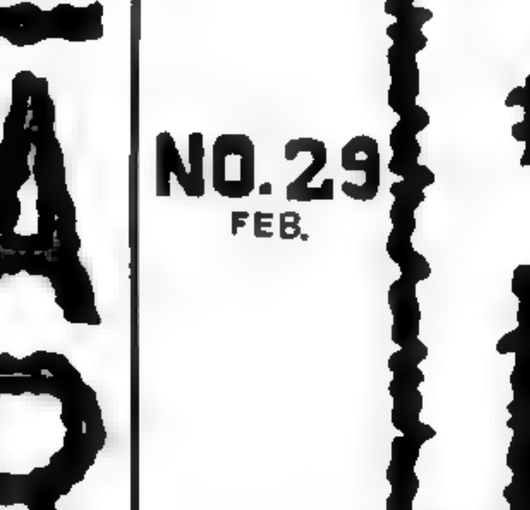
FLEER

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

THE HAUNT OF FEAR

NO. 29
FEB.

FEATURING...



THE OLD WITCH

THE VAULT-KEEPER

THE CRYPT-KEEPER

THE S-F PORTFOLIO

"We at E.C. are proudest of our S-F magazines!"

From the first time this statement appeared in advertising both editors & artists set out to prove through toil that they meant it! The following six pages present in order of publication covers by Wallace Wood, Al Feldstein, Joe Orlando, Al Williamson, Frank Frazzeta and Jack Davis.

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SEPT-OCT.

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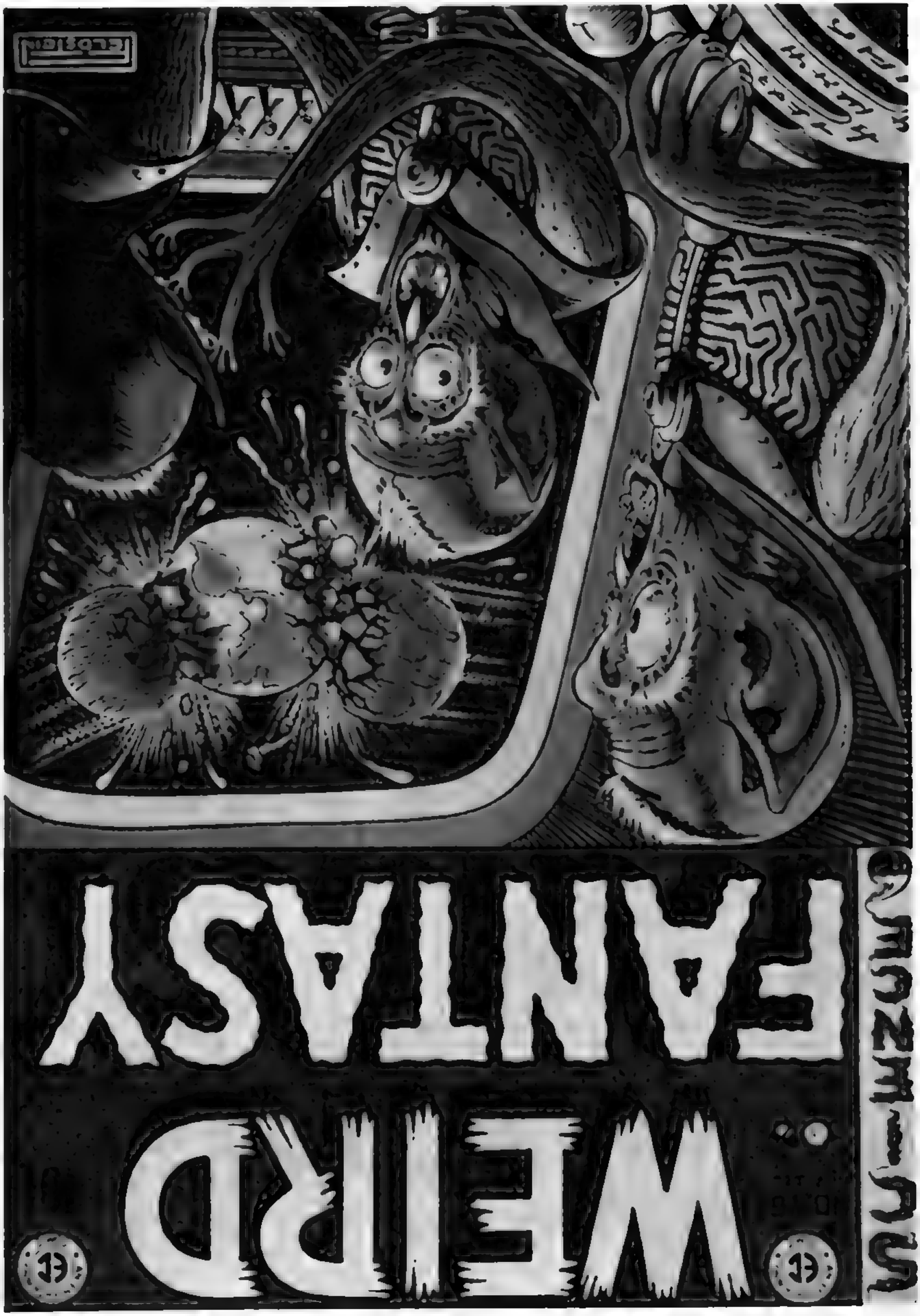
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NO. 19
MAY-JUNE

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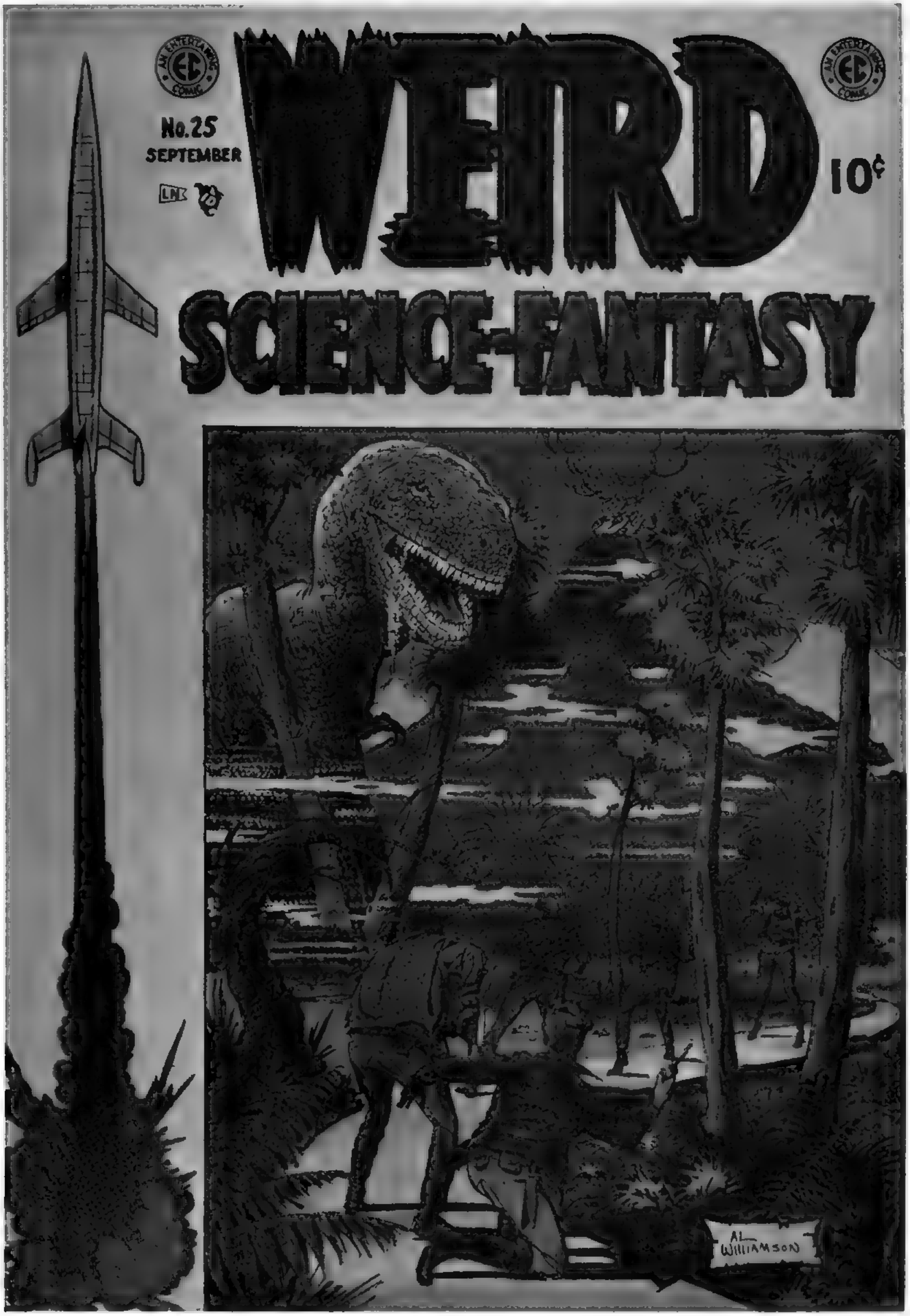
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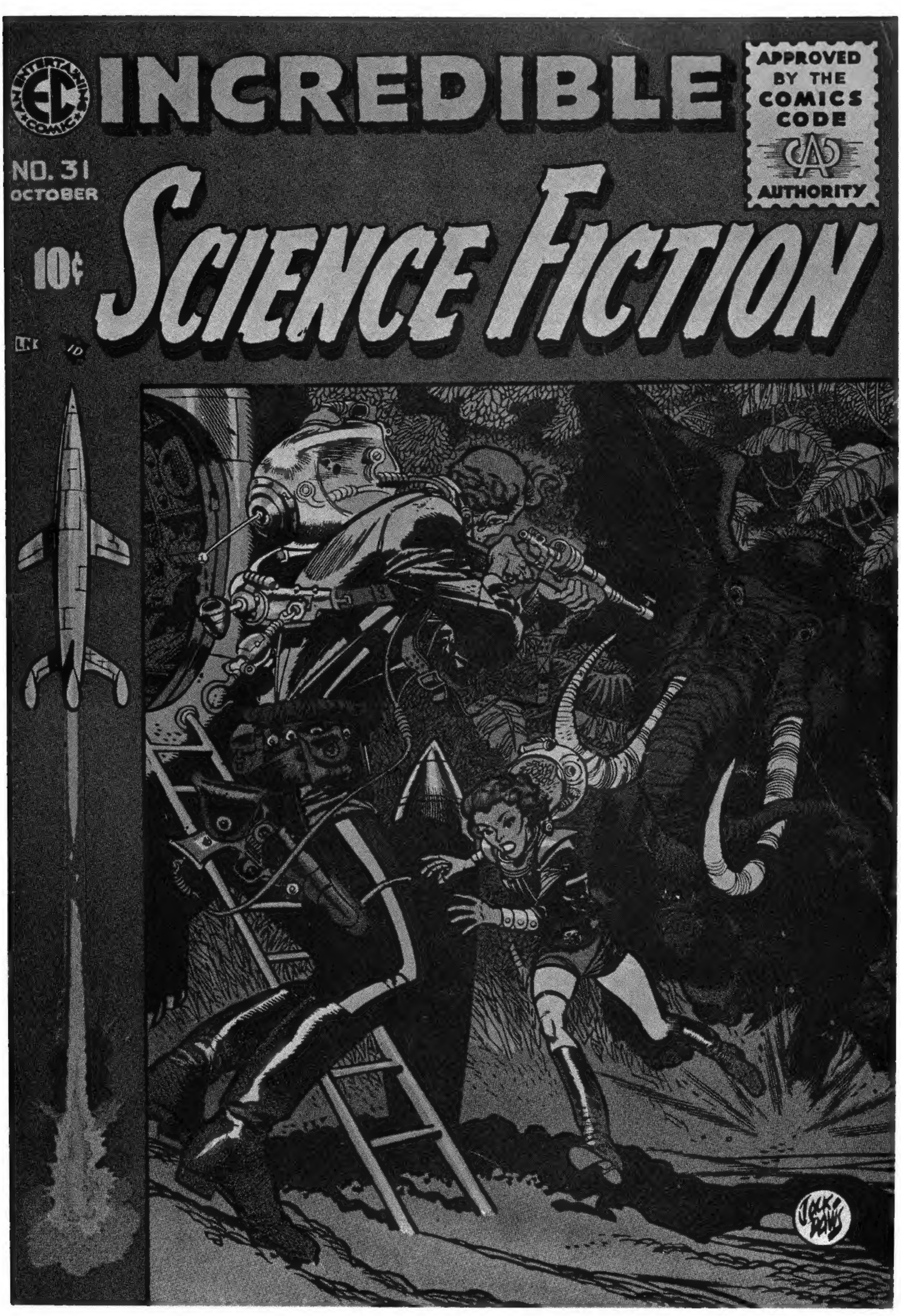

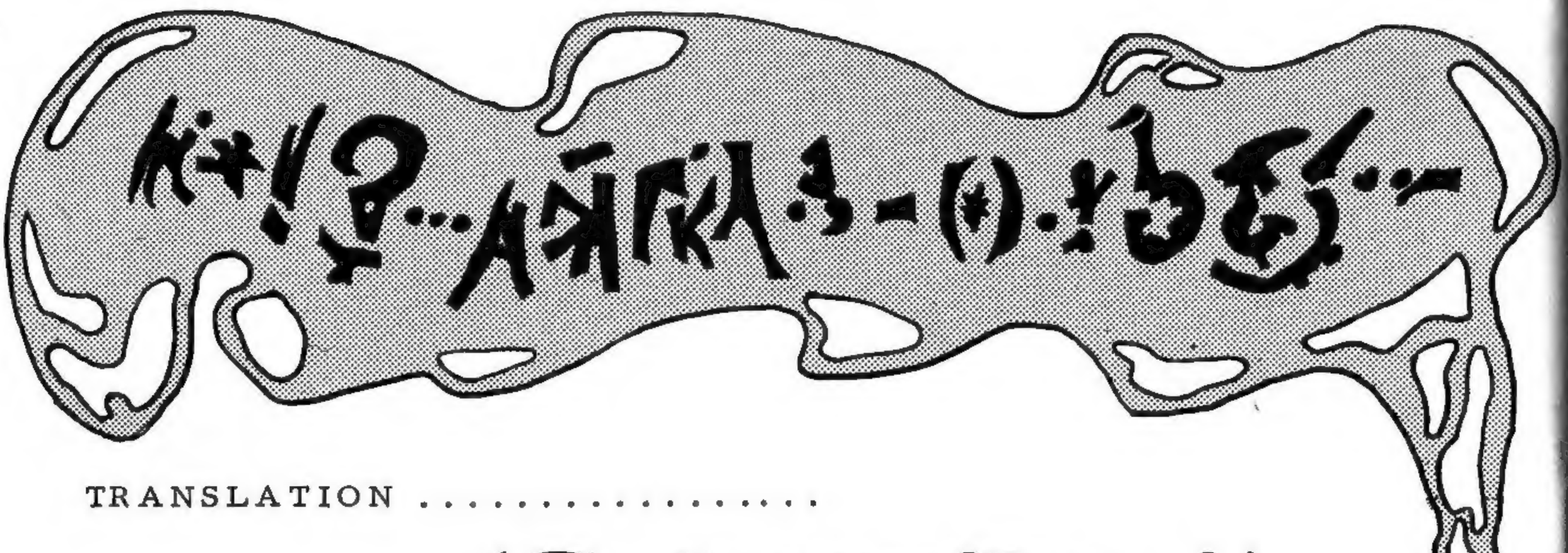

TRANSLATION .....

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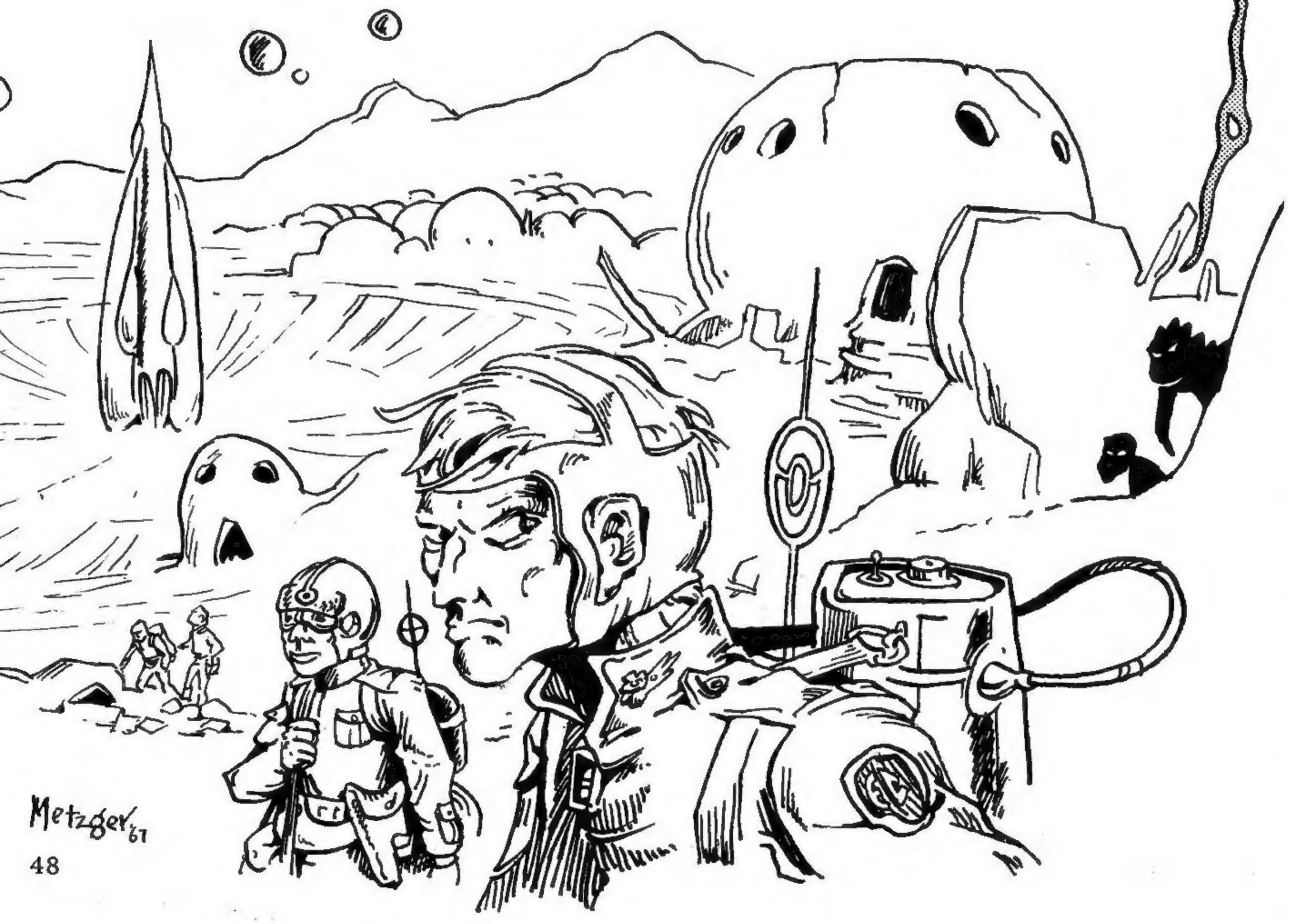
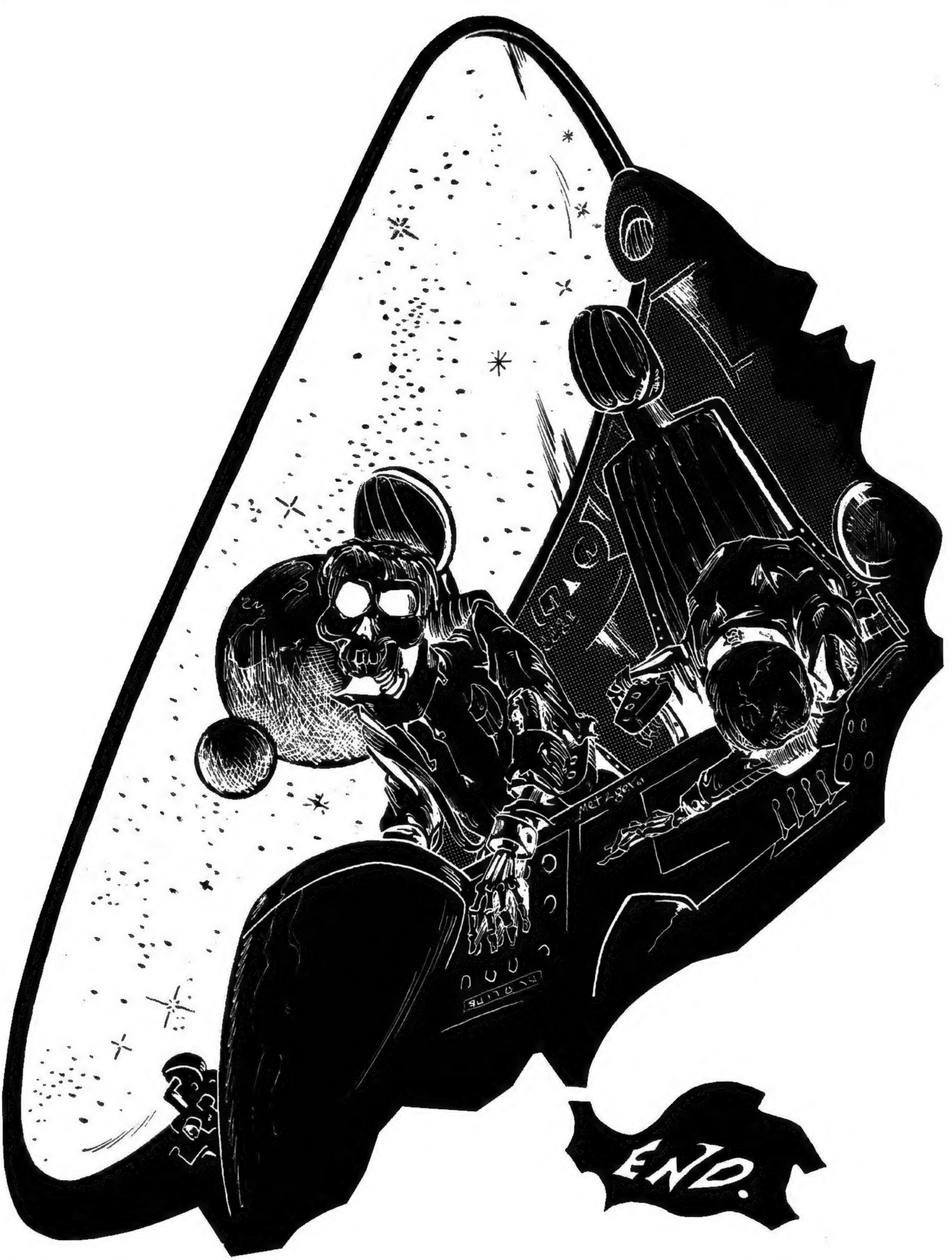
Yes!! Subscribe...before we decide to raise the price of SQUA TRONT even more! SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW $2.00 FOR ISSUES 3 AND 4. If you have already subscribed to 2 and 3, then you will receive 3 at the price you sent. But you muckers out there that haven't -- hop to it!!! Future issues promise full color covers, unpublished work by the greats: Crandall, Evans, Frazetta, Kurtzman, Williamson, and a dream that we here at SQUA TRONT hope to make reality - original unpublished EC art!!!!




Metzger
END.

MAD
R. CRANDALL